

Testimony for SB284: “AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS”

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Doris A. Maldonado Mendez, and I am the Statewide Bilingual Health Information Specialist and Certified Community Health Worker for Parents Available to Help (PATH) CT as well as the Keep the Promise Coalition Co-Chair. I am a resident of West Hartford.

PATH CT & KTP stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

PATH CT has provided services to families throughout CT since 1986 at no burden to the families with special needs we serve. We provide supports and services to many underserved families in CT including those that are immigrant and/or undocumented who need assistance with healthcare navigation, enrollment into Medicaid and other state eligibility programs. Families that are not eligible due to their immigration status are incredibly vulnerable and greatly impacted by social determinants of health such as housing, food insecurity, health and poverty. We must develop legislation, policies and funding for community based organizations and community health centers to provide these basic needs to be met for all families in CT.

KTP maintains its focus, since 1999, on assuring that Connecticut provides the comprehensive range of housing, supports and services that persons of every age need to maintain good health, including mental health, and play an active role in the community. In order to accomplish this goal, advocacy is required on all levels of government, and KTP is committed to doing all that it can in assuring that the voices of people with lived experience are heard when decisions are being made.

We support S.B. 284 and ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, we ask the committee to work towards opening access to all community members in CT regardless of age, status or abilities.

Thank you for your time in fortifying the path and promise of good health throughout Connecticut's lifespan.

Sincerely,
Doris A. Maldonado Mendez, M.Ed